

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to a first office action dated June 29, 2006. By present amendment Applicants have canceled claims 3, 4, 10 & 11 and amended claims 1 and 9. Applicants have added claim 17. Claims 1, 2, 5-9, and 12-17 remain pending.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-3 and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by O'Donnell et al. (6,123,1786).

Applicants have amended claim 1 by adding the features of previously presented claim 3 and the further limitation that the self-aligning washer comprises a first portion interfacing with the load cell and a second portion interfacing with the hitch and wherein the first and second portion are adapted to interface with each other to maintain the hitch in a position normal to the load cell. This further limitation is supported by the specification in paragraph 024.

Applicants have reviewed the art cited in the record and find no teaching either alone or in combination of the invention as claimed.

Claim 2 depends from and further restricts claim 1 and therefore also contain patentable subject matter.

Claim 3 has been canceled.

Applicants have amended claim 9 by adding the features of previously presented claim 11 and the further limitation that each self-aligning washer comprises a first portion interfacing with the load cell and a second portion interfacing with the hitch and wherein the first and second portion are adapted to interface with each other to maintain the hitch in a position normal to the load cell. This further limitation is supported by the specification in paragraph 024.

Applicants have reviewed the art cited in the record and find no teaching either alone or in combination of the invention as claimed

Claims 10 and 11 have been canceled.

The Examiner rejected Claims 4-8 and 12-16 under 103(a). Claims 4 & 12 have been canceled. Claims 5-8 depend either directly or indirectly from and further limit Claim 1 and therefore contain patentable subject matter. Claims 13-16 depend from and further limit Claim 9 and therefore also contain patentable subject matter.

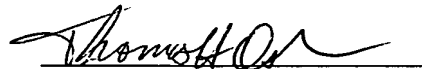
CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the subject application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner feel a phone interview would be helpful in processing the subject application, please do not hesitate to call the undersigned.

Please charge any fee for this statement to Deposit Account No. 15-0750, Order No. OT-4919.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Barrett et. al.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas H. Osborn", written over a horizontal line.

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